

Message Text

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ACTION L-01

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9218

INFO AMEMBASSY BERN

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

USDEL JEC PARIS

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 1196

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PDIP, WMO, S, VS, VN, 85

SUBJECT: PRG ISSUE AT SECOND SESSION OF CONFERENCE ON LAW OF
WAR AND AT SEVENTH WMO CONGRESS

REF: (A) STATE 17443; (B) ROME 897; (C) ROME 908

1. AMBASSADOR CALLED THIS MORNING (JAN 27) ON SECRETARY GENERAL
GAJA, ITALIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY, TO REVIEW SUBJECT PRG ISSUE,
URGE ITALIAN SUPPORT, AND CONVEY MESSAGE REF (A) THAT GOI CAN
SAFELY EXPECT GOOD EC COMPANY IN SUPPORT OF USG POSITION,
THAT USG CONSIDERS ITALIAN SUPPORT EXTREMELY IMPORTANT, AND THAT
USG WOULD HAVE DIFFICULTY UNDERSTANDING A SECOND ITALIAN ABSTENTION
ON PRG ISSUE AT SECOND SESSION OF CONFERENCE ON LAW OF WAR.

2. SECRETARY GENERAL GAJA ASSURED AMBASSADOR OF ITALIAN SUPPORT
ON PROCEDURAL ISSUE, STATING THAT ITALIANS "WILL DO OUR BEST/ TO
INSURE SUBSTANTIVE ISSUE WILL REQUIRE TWO/THIRDS VOTE. GAJA
SAID THAT THE GOI FULLY UNDERSTANDS THE IMPORTANCE AT THE PRESENT
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MOMENT, TO AVOID HAVING THE PRG PARTICIPATE IN GENEVA AT THE LAW

OF WAR CONFERENCE. ON SUBSTANTIVE ISSUE, HOWEVER, WHILE UNDER-
STANDING OUR POSITION GAJA SAID THAT THE MATTER WOULD HAVE TO BE
DECIDED BY MINISTER RUMOR.

3. GAJA EXPLAINED THE BACKGROUND OF THE PREVIOUS ITALIAN
ABSTENTION (REFTEL B, PARA 2) AND POINTED OUT THAT THE ITALIAN
FOREIGN MINISTRY IS UNDER CONTINUING PRESSURE FROM THE ITALIAN
PARLIAMENTARY LEFT-WING OPPOSITION, TO UP-GRADE ITALIAN TREATMENT
OF THE PRG. THE GOI UNDERSTANDS FULLY THE REASONS WHY THE PRG
CANNOT BE GIVEN TREATMENT AS A GOVERNMENT, AS IT HAS NONE OF THE
ATTRIBUTES THEREOF. HOWEVER, THE PARLIAMENTARY SITUATION IN
ITALY AND THE DEPENDENCE OF THE FOURTH MORO GOVERNMENT ON
SOCIALISTS (PSI) VOTES TO MAINTAIN ITS MAJORITY MUST BE CONSIDERED IN
ANY DECISION WITH REGARD TO THE PRG.

4. WITH REGARD TO THE POSTAL BALLOT CONCERNING POSSIBLE
INVITATION TO THE PRG TO ATTEND THE SEVENTH CONGRESS OF THE WMO,
GAJA SAID THAT THE ITALIANS WILL OPPOSE ANY SUCH INVITATION.

5. COMMENT: WE CAN ASSUME THAT FOREIGN MINISTER RUMOR WOULD BE
RELUCTANT TO REVERSE THE DECISION TAKEN LAST YEAR BY HIS
PREDECESSOR AS FOREIGN MINISTER, AND PRESENT PRIME MINISTER, ALDO
MORO. WE CANNOT BE SANGUINE THAT THE ITALIANS MIGHT OPPOSE
PRG PARTICIPATION IN THE LAW OF WAR CONFERENCE IN THE EVENT THAT
THE SUBSTANCE COMES TO A VOTE. AT THE SAME TIME WE BELIEVE THAT
THE ITALIANS WILL VERY MUCH WISH TO AVOID THE SUBSTANCE OF THE
ISSUE AND WILL THEREFORE DO THEIR BEST, AS GAJA PROMISED,
TO SEE THAT THE SUBSTANTIVE ISSUE DOES NOT ARISE. VOLPE

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